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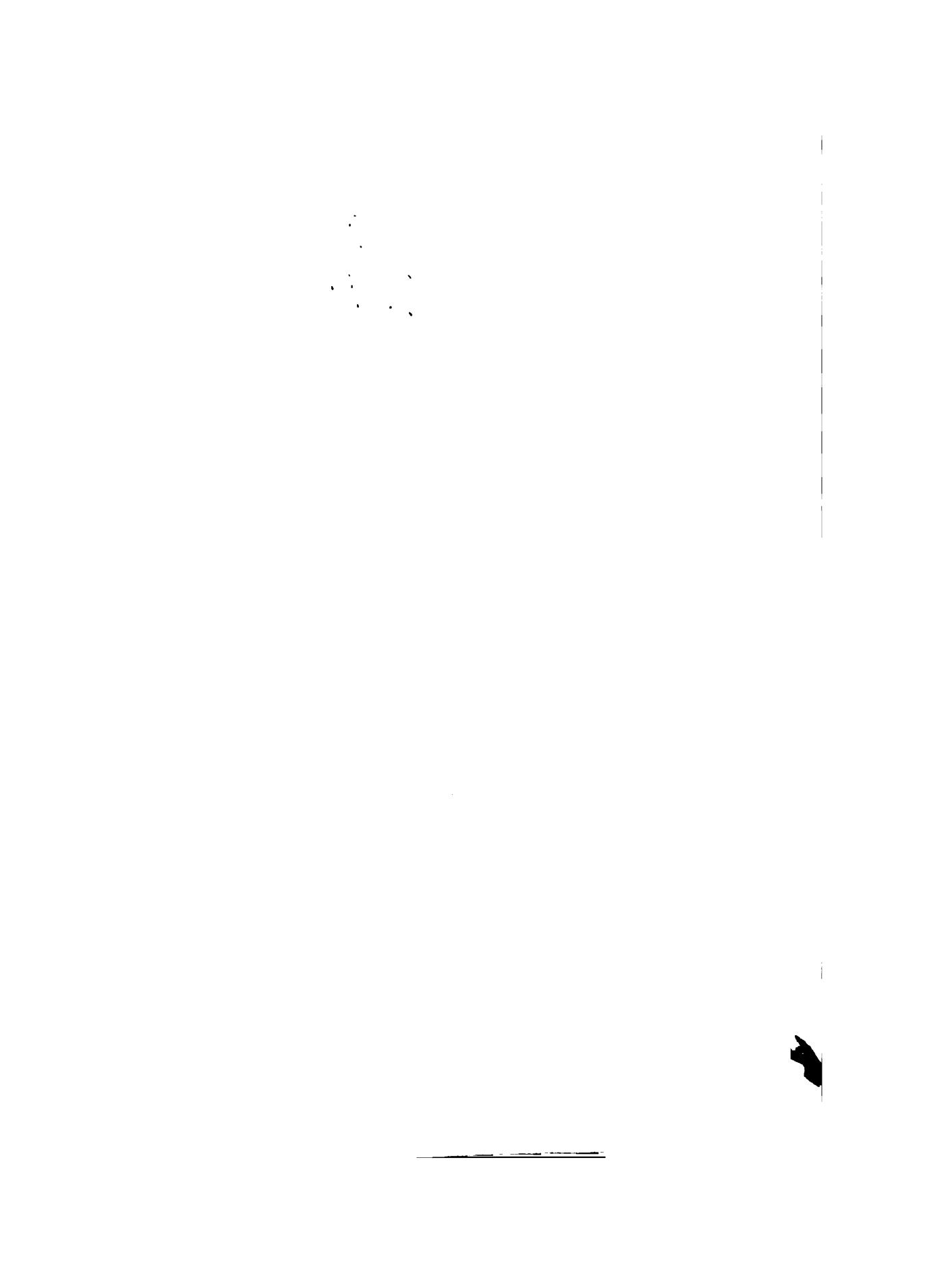
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# In Memoriam

## GEORGE PROCTOR WANTY

March 12th, 1856  
July 9th, 1906

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GEORGE Proctor Wanty, Judge of the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan, died in London, England, July 9, 1906. He was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan, March 12, 1856, son of Samuel and Elizabeth Proctor Wanty, both of whom were born in England. He completed the public school courses in 1872, was for four years in business as a clerk and bookkeeper, and in 1876 entered the law department of the University of Michigan, from which he was graduated in 1878. Upon being admitted to the Bar, he removed to Grand Rapids, which city was thereafter his home. Serving first as clerk in the office of an established firm of lawyers, he was successively partner in the firms of Foote & Wanty, Maynard & Wanty and Fletcher and Wanty; the partnership with Mr. Niram A. Fletcher being formed in April, 1883, and continuing until the death of Mr. Fletcher in 1899. Mr. Fletcher's place in the firm was taken by Mr. Loyal E. Knappen, the style being Wanty & Knappen, and this connection continued until March, 1900, when Mr. Wanty was appointed to the position on the Bench made vacant by the promotion of Hon. Henry F. Severens to the position of Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.

Mr. Wanty married Emma M. Nichols, June 22, 1886, and she and their two children, Helen and Thomas Cooley Wanty, survive him. Judge Wanty held no other public office than the one in which he died. He was president of the Michigan State Bar Association in 1884, and was a prominent and useful member of the American Bar Association, serving as chairman of the General Council of that body. In religion he was an Episcopalian, and during his residence in Grand Rapids was a consistent, helpful member of St. Mark's Church. The burial service was held on Saturday afternoon, July 21, at four o'clock, from the residence, the Rt. Rev. John N. McCormick, D. D., officiating, assisted by the Rt. Rev. Geo. D. Gillespie, D. D., the interment being at Oak Hill Cemetery.

The pall bearers were: Charles H. Bender, John A. Covode, Arthur C. Denison, L. E. Knappen, Edward Lowe, John Patton, Charles J. Potter and James R. Wylie.

The honorary pall bearers were Justice Day of the supreme court of the United States; Judge Severens and Judge Swan of the Federal court; Judge Stuart, Judge Wolcott, Judge Perkins and Judge Jewell of the local courts; Judge Montgomery, Judge McAlvay, Judge Grant, Judge Carpenter, Judge Blair, Judge Moore, Judge Hooker, and Judge Ostrander of the supreme court of Michigan.

Attaches of the United States court Charles L. Fitch, Olin Gowld, Henry J. Truax, Mrs. Tenhopen, George G. Covell, Ella Backus, Thomas A. McCarthy, Henry Briggs, Charles J. Potter, Arthur A. Allen, John M. Hoogerhyde, Ed. O'Donnell, William K. Clute, F. W. Wait, Kirk E. Wicks.

Charles W. Garfield, George W. Thayer, O. H. Simonds, William H. Anderson, S. M. Lemon, P. V. Fox, William Alden Smith, E. H. Hunt, W. C. McMillian of Detroit, L. H. Withey, Mr. Rees of Houghton, and Henry M. Campbell of Detroit.

## **Memorial from the Colonial Club**

**Prepared by Bishop McCormick.**

The Colonial Club of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was organized in the summer of 1890. Its active membership is limited to fifteen, and new members to fill vacancies must receive the unanimous ballot of the Club. During the seventeen years of its existence the Club has followed consecutive courses of study, chiefly in American history, each member preparing and presenting one paper a year. The standard of the Club is high, and one of its members has stated, "I am unwilling to read a paper before the Colonial Club that I would not be willing to read anywhere."

For many years the ranks of the Club were uninvaded by death, but more recently several deaths have occurred, and the one year 1906-1907 was marked by the decease of two of the Club's valued members, George Proctor Wanty and John Patton, Jr.

Judge Wanty was elected to membership in 1891 and up to the time of his death was a most faithful and helpful member of the Club. He gave to its work the same enthusiasm and the same loyalty which he gave to all the diversified interests of his life. Except upon necessity he was never absent from its meetings, and its intimate fellowship offered him a congenial field for the gracious activity of that rare gift of friendship which was one of his most remarkable characteristics. To the preparation of his own papers he brought all his resources of intelligence, observation and research, and to the common stock of criticism and discussion he was always a most stimulating contributor. Outside his own family no associates of George Proctor Wanty are more deeply and closely bereaved by his death than are the members of the Colonial Club, and their love follows him into the land of the great departed.



**Resolutions and  
Memorial addresses presented upon the  
occasion of a meeting of  
the Kent County Bar Association,  
presided over by Hon. Wm. R. Day, Justice  
of the Supreme Court of the United States,  
Saturday afternoon, July 21, 1906, at 1:30,  
at the United States Court Rooms,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan,  
on the death of  
Judge George Proctor Wanty.**



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# In Memoriam

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was properly rounded out by his appointment to the bench of the Federal Courts.

Those of us who have known him through his whole career need no refining of thought or words to explain his character or his success. It is the old story of daily duty done when and as it should be done—with his might. Equipped with a sound intellect and dauntless heart and spirit, he made them all tell in results by his untiring application. Each item of work that came before him was instantly attacked, and unceasingly hammered at without delay or procrastination until it was done, and the best of his well-fibred brain was in it. In his office or in the courts he was eager and keen to dispatch his work, but it was not in a spirit of impatience that problems were approached. Whatever impatience he may have shown with men with whom he had to deal, he was never impatient with the questions to be solved; those were always threshed out to the last kernel of truth and justice as he saw it. Indefatigable worker at desk and bar, he was loyalty itself to the interests in his charge and the persons of his clients.

His career at the bar was an incentive to all who worked with him or against him, and remains such to all those who wish to emulate a life of thorough going work in the attainment of the good and the right.

In practice he was pre-eminently an advocate. Grounded in his cause, he was eager to win for the doing of what he regarded as justice. He believed in the securing of justice through organized courts, and he believed in the courts as the only safe agency for the working out of the substantial rights of a dispute, and, however strenuous his insistence upon his own side of a cause, the final result, even when against him, was a righteous one because worked out through the tribunal in which he believed. His unbending faith in the court as an institution made him a better judge and helped him to sink those habits of advocacy that a long and busy practice had made very deep.

He carried to his judicial seat the learning so diligently acquired, his habit of thorough investigation, and the same promptness that characterized his work at the bar.

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It would be rash to attempt at this time any extended estimate of his work as a judge. We believe he repaid to his government the honor bestowed upon him in his appointment, by maintaining, at its best, the character and reputation of the courts over which he presided for learning, dispatch of business and righteous judgement. He was a worthy successor of Judges Withey and Severens, which is high praise indeed.

He was one of the State's best citizens.

His views of life were clear and his appreciation of his duties distinct. In public matters as well as private, those duties were imperative with his conscience, impelling action. Beliefs and convictions ruled him, not uncertain opinions, and he could be and was as emphatic as a partisan where a conviction of his own was involved, and he matched the depth of that belief with the vigor of his expression.

Suspicion never rested upon his honor or integrity as a man or a judge, and words can say no more in that behalf.

Faithful and loyal friend! "There's the respect that gives us pause." Pain hinders speech.

Courteous, manly and considerate with all in his daily habit, to his intimates he was indeed "grappled with hooks of steel." At fifty his work was well rounded and his attainment much beyond that of the multitude who live out all their years, and so his life can not be called incomplete; but for his love and friendship we could wish for yet uncounted years.

Mr. Patton: I rise to second this motion, with a heart full of sorrow, and without the hope that I can say anything today satisfactory to the bench and bar. I loved him too dearly and knew him too well. Oppressed with the limitations of this sad occasion, unable now to properly estimate his life and character, hardly able to command myself, I should prefer to listen to his praise from others, for my mind is crowded with the memories of years of closest companionship and intimacy.

Twenty-eight years ago we began our lives here together as clerks in the same law office, and from that time he has been my

warmest, my closest, my best friend. We have shared each other's joys and sorrows in a friendship which was never darkened by even the shadow of a passing cloud. So, to me, this is one of the saddest days I have ever known. Here in this company that knew him so well, and in this place, so eloquent of him, where the echoes of his voice have scarcely ceased to sound, I can truthfully say that he was a remarkable man, of rare nobility of heart and soul, an ideal judge, with high purposes and aspirations, a stainless gentleman, devoted to his family and home, a most loyal and sacrificing friend. His career is the familiar one in American life in which we have pride, and to which our institutions offer opportunities. First, adverse circumstances, early struggles, clerking in a store, bookkeeping, working in a bank, to secure money with which to gratify his hunger for an education; then, winning his way by hard battles, integrity and character and learning, to the front rank of the profession in the state, his star rising steadily in fame and fortune until it reached the zenith and was so sadly obscured by sudden darkness.

Those of us who have watched him in his early efforts to get his feet on the ladder which led to success, have not failed to observe one of his most striking characteristics. He was endowed with a marvelously grateful heart. Thoughtfulness for others was almost a passion with him, and he never forgot a friend or a favor. He could not remain a debtor to any man, and it was his delight to pay back time and again, substantially and in full measure, every act of kindness he had ever experienced. This was particularly true in the case of anyone who had befriended him in early life. He was one of the most approachable of men, with an unusually genuine, helpful, sunny nature. He did not withhold the word of praise when deserved, and his courtesy and kindness to the younger members of the profession was most marked. What a true friend he was! In the busy years of his professional life, so full of arduous labors, of the most exacting and wearing kind, his hands were always free for any service his friends could ask of him. He was never too busy to listen or to help, and no mission seemed too hard for him to perform. All his life he had been a

burden bearer, and had lived for others, and he never hesitated to enter on tasks others shrank from. He anticipated every need and no personal sacrifice, however hard, was too great for him to perform for one he loved. His life is a signal illustration of how little the mere holding of office is necessary for a man to have commanding power and wide-spread influence, for these came to him early. He was a natural leader of men, with a strong personal magnetism, and such indefatigable industry and enthusiasm for a cause or a man, that it was inspiring and contagious. I have never known a man whose friendship so many men were eager to gain, and who lavished it with such unaffected kindness on so many. He was simple in his habits, transparently honest and genuine, and he always rang true. There was no pretense, no sham about him. He lived a full life, and everything he did was done with all his might. He had a very high conception of duty, and covered every detail in any work in which he was engaged. With a warm and affectionate nature, he was loving and beloved, and it was a joy to be admitted to the secrets of such a heart. He was a most helpful and generous man, quick to respond to a tale of suffering, and all classes and conditions mourn his loss, and a very wide circle looked upon him with positive affection.

His greatest work was done here, and in the few years he served on the Bench his reputation grew and widened constantly. He was so methodical and punctual, had such a clear and flashing intellect, and was such a thorough student, had such a facility in dispatching business that he became an unusually efficient and able judge. The word "procrastinate" was not in his vocabulary, and he told me once that he made it a rule never to go on a vacation leaving a single undecided matter in his court. He was most conscientious and considerate of the rights of both attorneys and litigants in this regard. The important litigation which came before him during the last few years, and the celerity and learning he displayed in deciding it, have won increasing admiration and greatly enhanced his reputation. But all our high hopes for him are buried in the mystery of his early and untimely

death, and we can now only wonder what the future *might* have held for him had life and strength been spared.

He was a very brave man with a sublime courage and an unshaken faith in the "God, who doeth all things well," and, when, after a severe attack, last January, in Cincinnati, of the disease which finally took his life, when he was told by his physician of its serious nature, he said he had no fear of death, that he was prepared and ready to go when his time should come, for he had enjoyed a happy life, and had no regrets. Happy shall we all be, if, when the summons comes to us, we too can be fortified and face the great change with such a consoling and unconquerable faith as his. He died, as he had often expressed a wish to go,—suddenly. He dreaded a long, lingering illness, and while his loss is an irreparable one, and to many the world will seem lonely without him, for him the conflict is past, and he has entered into rest and assured immortality, with the great and good who have preceded him. There still remains for us the blessing of an inspiring and helpful life, and the recollections of a gallant and generous spirit, whose memory will ever be fragrant and beautiful.

"He has done the work of a true man,  
Crown him, honor him, love him,  
Weep over him tears of women,  
Stoop manliest brows above him.

"For the warmest of hearts is frozen,  
The freest of hands is still,  
And the gap in our picked and chosen,  
The long years may not fill.

\* \* \*

"Never rode to the wrong's redressing,  
A worthier paladin;  
Shall we not hear the blessing,  
'Good and faithful, enter in' "

Judge Montgomery: May it please your Honors:

A community, a state, and his associates in a wider sphere of usefulness, stand at the bier of a great man to pay a last tribute of respect.

In the presence of this awful sorrow, I cannot attempt a review of the life work of George P. Wanty. I can only find words to faintly express in that simple way which would have been most pleasing to him, my immeasurable grief at his untimely taking off.

From almost the day that, coming to our city a young man just past his majority, beginning the struggle of life, he entered upon the practice of that profession which he so adorned, I knew him intimately. Outside the circle of my own family, I was never blessed with a friendship more close, more enduring, more disinterested and loyal. He was my friend in name, my brother in acts of disinterested kindness and devoted loyalty.

I have never known a sweeter, purer life. Honest in every thought and deed, generous in every impulse, he was also as pure minded as a child and gentle as a woman. He was more than just to every man. He never withheld aid from any worthy cause, and I have never known him to sully his lips with a word which might not with entire propriety have fallen from the lips of his wife or mother.

When all this is said, it remains to add that Judge Wanty was in no sense a negative man. His life was not only noble, manly and pure, it was also in the highest degree forceful. He was industry personified. His moral convictions were positive and unwavering. His contests for right were in the open field. He was the knight of the tilted lance. He despised intrigue and low cunning, and condemned a cause which could not triumph in the light of day.

Such was our friend. The lesson of his life is an open book. These qualities manifested themselves in every relation of life.

I will not invade the sacred precincts of that ideal domestic life, that home where grief holds unrelenting sway. I can only say that in its every relation he exhibited the same qualities. He

was a dutiful and loving son, a kind and affectionate husband, an indulgent and thoughtful father.

To his friends who were so often beneath his roof, he was the thoughtful and entertaining host and jovial comrade. In his relations with his friends he was the most unselfish man whom I ever knew. It can be truly said of him that he never stopped to count the cost of serving a friend.

The career of Judge Wanty, his remarkable success at the bar, his equally notable success as a Judge, will be known to and appreciated by posterity; but to his family and friends, the qualities of which I have spoken will remain the most precious and sacred heritage. A memory apart which none other can invade.

Mr. Henry M. Campbell: May it please the Court:  
The Bar of Detroit mourns with you today.

When the shaft of death closed the career of Judge Wanty, he was at the zenith of his powers and of his usefulness. His reputation had already extended far beyond the confines of his city and district. He was rapidly becoming recognized throughout the state and country as a jurist of a very high order of ability, as well as a just and courageous man. Those great qualities of mind and heart known and recognized so long by his friends and associates had made their impress upon the public mind, which accorded him a high place in his chosen profession.

Like all really great men, he was simple in his tastes and quiet in his manner of living. His life was an open book, which was known to all men. He lived in the broad white light of publicity which illumined his every action, and it may truthfully be said of him that throughout his busy and useful career, he never had occasion to seek the shadow.

To what heights he might have risen in his profession, had he been spared, no one can tell. Measuring the future by the past, a career of constantly increasing usefulness to the public lay before him; but the contemplation of what might have been, can only serve to intensify the great public loss occasioned by his death.

In these days of unrest, when a great moral awakening seems to be spreading throughout the land, there is need of men, true men of high ideals, untouched by sordid greed, clear sighted, men with the courage of their convictions who can deal out even-handed justice to all alike, whether they be rich or poor, friend or foe, of high or low estate. Such a man was George P. Wanty, and such is the measure of our loss.

But that is not all. That is not the reason why our eyes are dim with tears, and our voices choked in their utterance. It is because a beloved friend has gone out of our lives. The touch of his hand, the glance of his eye, the warm sympathy of his voice, all these we shall know no more.

But the example of his noble life, and the sweet fragrance of his memory remain.

The good which men do lives after them. No greater praise can be awarded any man than to say of him that the world is better because he has lived. While we mourn Judge Wanty's death, we rejoice that he has lived.

Mr. Rees: May it please the Court:

At this session of the Circuit Court of the United States for the Western District of Michigan, we are met together here, gathered from a broad territory, coming some of us from great distances, and representing as well a vast number who are with us in feeling and in spirit, with but one predominating and overpowering sentiment. Our hearts are filled with the most profound grief; our very beings are pervaded with the deepest sorrow. It is with grieving hearts and with sorrowing spirits that we are today brought to the full realization of our deprivation in the loss of him, to honor whose memory we have come together--of him who before his full allotted time, at the zenith of the powers of his manhood, has wrapped about him the drapery of his final resting place and has lain himself down to his last sleep. And we, who knew him and knew his life as he lived it, know that when his summons came, startling in its unexpectedness as it was, he was sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, the only

consolation of the Christian world in the contemplation of the end inevitable to us all, and, when that end is at hand, the only sure anchor of hope.

As some small measure of consolation to us in this hour of our grief, because of his departure from us, we may feel grateful that in our remembrance of him we can say, as was said of another jurist on a similar occasion:

"His lamp went out at the last without unsteadiness or flickering. He continued to exercise all the powers of his mind without diminution or obscuration, and all the affections of his heart with no abatement of energy or warmth until death drew the impenetrable veil between us and him. Indeed, he seems to us now, as in truth he is, not extinguished or ceasing to be, but only withdrawn, as the clear sun goes down at its setting, not darkened, but only no longer seen."

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity, on behalf of the members of the bar of the Upper Peninsula, constituting the northern division of his district, as well as on my own behalf, of joining in a tribute to the memory of him who has been taken from us so suddenly. I did not have the privilege of so close or so intimate an acquaintance with Judge Wanty as would warrant me in speaking to you at length of his life or of his work. To most of you he was known better and more intimately, both professionally and in his social and private life. But from the time when his duties brought him into the Upper Peninsula, we, of that district, have heard but one expression from all sources and from all classes and at all times—from the members of the bar who practiced before him, from the witnesses who appeared in his court to give their testimony, from the grand and petit jurors who were summoned to assist in the administration of justice, from all who met him or in any manner came in contact with him—"What a fine man Judge Wanty is." And I can think of no better words to say than those.

Although separated from him by almost the entire length of the state of Michigan, from an acquaintance running back some fifteen years, from a limited association with him as a practicing

lawyer, through my experience before him in his judicial capacity, and through the personal and social relations which have been, to a small extent only, my privilege, and which I can never forget, I learned to respect him as a lawyer for his ability and his integrity; I learned to honor him as a Judge for his learning and his uprightness and for his charming personality, his beautiful character, his genial companionship and his warm heartedness; I learned to love him as a man and as a friend, and I feel an assured conviction that added opportunity for association with him could but have increased and strengthened the feeling of love, honor and respect which seemed to overflow in one's heart spontaneously when with him.

Though he has gone from us, and though he is dead, yet he will continue to live in the strong and lasting impression which his life, his services and his beautiful character have made upon our minds and upon our hearts. His influence and example have always been for those things which are highest and best, and the forcefulness of his character has impressed that influence and example upon his contemporaries and upon the community, so that they remain with us and will continue their uplifting force, and while we live they can never be obliterated. And until the time shall come when we ourselves must go to join him in the realms of the departed, we shall have that influence with us; and if, perchance, we in our turn can reflect and diffuse its uplifting power, then will his life continue, and he will not have wholly died. Although the angel of death has irrevocably closed the portals between ourselves and him, yet in the lasting influences for good which he has left on this side of the gateway, in the high regard of all who knew him or knew of him, in the warm love and affection of his friends and associates, he still lives.

In his life Judge Wanty was an example to all of us in the profession, of studious and painstaking application, of that form of genius resulting in eminent success in his profession, which is made up in a large measure of hard work. To the community at large he was an example of honesty and integrity, of high-mindedness and right living; and in the midst of our profound grief at

our loss, which must continue without mitigation except from the healing hand of time; in our heartfelt sorrowing that he has been taken from us; in the warm sympathy which so abundantly flows out from our hearts towards his bereaved and stricken family and kindred, there may be yet mingled, and it is right that we should entertain, a feeling of gratitude that he has lived. Such a life as his, as a citizen, as a lawyer, as a jurist and as a man, so lovely in its disposition, so beautiful in its character, cannot but tend to make the whole world better. And we shall hereafter indulge it as a grateful recollection that we have lived with him, that we have been his contemporaries, and there is not one of us but who will experience a feeling of pride in the remembrance that we have known such a man and have been privileged to call him friend.

In the midst of our grief at his death, let us be glad because of his life. As we pour out our souls in sorrowing, let us take heart because of the influence which that life has thrown about us and with which it has enveloped the community. Let us keep with us the feeling that he remains with us in the shining example which we shall love to contemplate---an example which should make of us better lawyers and better men, and of the world a better world; and in thus remaining with us, he still lives and he continues to live a life which death cannot touch; and the sting of death is removed and the victory of the grave, now apparently so overwhelming, is changed into defeat and becomes the triumph of a good and godly life.

Mr. Knappen: May it please the Court:

The passing away of no man outside of my own family could have touched me more closely than has Judge Wanty's.

He was my friend with all that term meant to him.

I made his acquaintance soon after he began practice.

Upon my removal to this city, we became personal friends and that friendship has steadily grown and ripened with the years and under the intimate associations which have existed between us.

It is impossible for me to say at this time what I would like to say, and what I ought to say in tribute to his memory. I shall only do the best I can.

Judge Wanty has often been called a masterful man. He was strong in more ways than any other man I have intimately known.

His ancestry, his parentage, his boyhood days at Ann Arbor, the association with strong characters there, and the necessity of relying largely on his own exertions for the means of education, all combined to foster that ambition, that remarkable energy, that ruggedness of character, that keen insight, and that knowledge of men, which have so strongly marked his entire career.

It is not the least of his elements of strength that he has always looked at the world through frank, open eyes. He loved life and all its activities. He was a man, and nothing which interested humanity failed to interest him.

He was a strong lawyer. His legal learning was supplemented by a broad general culture acquired through systematic study, aided by no inconsiderable travel. His keen, logical mind, swiftly and unerringly as an arrow, found the central, vital point of the problem at hand.

Long before his accession to the Bench, his ability, his industry and energy, coupled with his high character, had made him one of the foremost lawyers of the state. At the time he was appointed to the Bench, he was, to my mind, easily the leader of the Bar of Western Michigan.

He had never been content to treat his profession merely as a means of income; he loved it and honored it, and believed it his duty to give back to it a full return for the benefits he received from it; and in spite of the demands of a large and lucrative practice, no lawyer in the state took a more active and effective interest than he in the higher work of his profession.

As a prominent member, and at one time President of the State Bar Association, and for several years as a member of the General Council of the American Bar Association, he rendered

conspicuous service towards the betterment of the practice and the attainment of higher professional ideals.

As said in the memorial presented here, his elevation to the Bench was but the natural and fitting culmination of his career at the Bar.

He was a strong judge. Others will speak of his career on the Bench. I content myself with saying that during the six short years of his judicial life, he gained as enviable a reputation on the Bench as he had earned at the Bar.

He was strong as a citizen. His life throughout has been marked by a high-minded public and civic spirit. He has always cheerfully contributed both money and personal effort toward every good work for the betterment of the material and social conditions of his city and community.

Although never holding public office until his accession to the Bench, he had never been afraid or ashamed to take an active and aggressive part, and sometimes an independent one, in the nomination and election of candidates for office, from the highest to the lowest. Thus, and thus only, was he a politician.

He was strong in his personal character. He loved the true, the beautiful and the good. He hated falsehood, deceit and evasion. The mainspring of his action was conscientious conviction. He was not only honest with others, he was honest with himself. His mind was open and worked along straight lines, always guided by that strong common sense which never failed him. In the practice of his profession, in his work on the Bench, and in his personal relations, public and private, he was absolutely fearless. He did not know how it felt to be afraid to do what his judgement and conscience told him was right; and these things made his judgements safe and sane.

His sympathies were wide and strong. Always charitable in public matters, his purse has been open to more than one young man and young woman who stood in need of help in getting a start in life.

He always looked courageously upon the bright side of life. This was not due merely to a cultivated philosophy or a habit of

cheerful optimism. The world was to him in fact bright and beautiful.

He saw even in his own illness and suffering only the kindness of his friends. It was characteristic of him that he should write to a friend during the illness of last winter:

"It is almost worth the confinement to receive so many tokens of affection from those we love, and when I get out again, I am sure every inconvenience will be forgotten, and only those things I enjoy so much will be remembered."

He was strong in his friendships. He was not merely friendly, although he was naturally genial and hospitable. Intense in all things, he was especially strong in his affections. He loved his friends, "and grappled them to his heart with hooks of steel," and held them there through prosperity and through adversity, through good report and through evil report. No personal exertion was ever too great to be made for a friend, nor did he wait to be applied to for friendly assistance. More than one person owes his success in life to Judge Wanty's friendly and voluntary effort.

The fact that this service is being held in spite of his well known wishes, emphasizes the love and esteem of his associates.

His home life was too sacred to mention here beyond saying that it was ideal.

A better rounded manhood I have never seen.

An ideal lawyer, judge, citizen and friend.

His character, personality and habit of thought have left an abiding influence upon my life and upon the lives of many others.

"He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again."

We feel today that his death is untimely, and tested by the loss of his companionship, that is surely true; but is it otherwise true? Is fullness of life to be measured by length of days? Can a man's taking off be declared untimely, when it follows the completion of a full life's work?

Judged by every test I know how to apply, Judge Wanty has done a full life's work. True, it has taken him but fifty years

to do what few men can do in seventy. But he has already won the full measure of success in his profession, and by his life has won the lasting honor, regard and affection of his fellow-men.

He has made the world much better for his having lived in it.

He has given joy and happiness to the lives of many.

He has fought the fight; he has come off victorious.

And the tender affection of the many to whose lives he has given inspiration and brightness will, so long as those lives shall last, keep his memory green.

Judge Severens: With deference to the Presiding Justice and to my brother Judges:

If, in what I am about to say, there should seem over-much of a personal quality, my reply must be that my private and official relations with Judge Wanty were of such a character that I cannot repel the influence which the recollection of them inspires.

Besides, the garland with which I could crown his memory is gathered not so much from common speech as from the garden of my own heart.

It was never my privilege to belong to your Association, but I have labored with you for many years in kindred pursuits for the common object of our profession. And now on this sad occasion, I join you in a common sorrow at the loss of our departed friend. It gives me a melancholy pleasure to have this opportunity to render my tribute of affection and respect to the memory of one who for many years, was my friend, and for all too short a time my associate also in judicial work.

To those who are more familiar with his early life I must leave the narration of those events which brought him into the arena of his chosen profession. When, in 1886, I assumed the office of United States Judge for this District, he was still a young man, about thirty I believe, but had already become a prominent member of your Bar. His firm, of which the lamented Fletcher was then a member, was employed in many important cases in the Federal Courts, and in them Mr. Wanty usually discharged

the duty of the advocate in jury causes. That duty was always well and ably done.

I am gratified to be able to say that in his attitude toward the court he never forgot to practice that courtesy and consideration which so link in the silken bonds of amity the lawyer and the judge, and go so far to make the practice and the administration of the law delightful. It happened, as indeed it frequently happens, that his contentions were not always sustained by the court. On such occasions, he responded by that wide-open, wondering look by which, as you well remember, he was accustomed to express his amazement and surprise that one could get so far wrong, but that was all, and I am sure he never carried away any heart-burning.

In 1900 it was a source of gratification to me that when I laid down the office of District Judge, the mantle fell on one so worthy and so well equipped for the place as I knew him to be. His long and extensive practice in the District and Circuit Courts of the United States had made him familiar with their practice and the general doctrines peculiar to those courts, and so saved to the public the cost of a novitiate.

He labored well and faithfully in his office and discharged its duties to the general satisfaction of the Bar and of the Public. If he sometimes fell into error, he suffered the fate common to all judges. It is not given to anything short of the wisdom of the Infinite always to distinguish the true from the false light, but our friend was fortunate in the fewness of his mistakes. He was called on several occasions to sit in the Circuit Court of Appeals. He was always welcomed with the glad hand, and in the consultations of the court and in its opinions written by him, he invariably gave a good account for his coming.

You who knew him as a personal friend, and I presume that means all of you, do not need to be told how "tender and true" he was. How apt those few short words of the poet are to express what the remembrance of his friendship recalls to our hearts.

It adds nothing to say that he was most cordial, gentle, generous and kind. The hospitality of his home was unstinted. His family life was beautiful to see. Further than this, even a friend may not intrude upon the privacy of the home.

As a man and as a citizen, he bore an unblemished character. Honorable in his dealings with men, and animated by a high purpose in public affairs, he was prompt and anxious to promote the right and repress the wrong.

There is an old proverb that, concerning the dead, nothing but the good shall be recalled. The admonition is needless here, for memory does not recall aught of ill in our friend. It is pitiful indeed, that he should be summoned from his work so long before the shadows of the evening began to deepen and while he was yet in the noon tide of his life. But we must be reconciled with what he accomplished, and rendering him the meed of commendation for the good he did and our overflowing gratitude for the delight of his companionship while he stayed, bid him a long farewell.

Death has ravaged away the mortal part, but the immortal spirit, the child of God, is beyond the dominion of death, and will, let us hope and believe, appear to us again when the morning comes.

Mr. Patton: Judge Lurton was unable to be present today, but he sent me this letter:

"Nashville, Tenn., July 18, 1906.

"Hon. John Patton,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.  
"My dear Mr. Patton:

Yours of the 14th at hand. I wish it were possible to attend the obsequies of my dear friend Judge Wanty. \* \* \* \*

"Judge Wanty's unexpected call to the other side is a sad blow to the judicial force of the Circuit. He had already taken a conspicuous rank as a trial judge and had a right to look forward to a very bright and useful career. But the loss of his fine personality

is even a sadder blow. As a husband and father he was inexplicably charming. As a citizen he was an example to be followed.

"To his church, his social circle and to his brethren of the bench and bar, his loss is irreparable.

"I cherish his friendship in life and will hold his memory as a precious thing.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) Horace H. Lurton."

Judge Swan: Bretheren of the Bar:

It is a rare tribute to one who passes from our midst, whether immediately from the Bench or from the ranks of the profession, or from our citizenship or from our friendship, that the voices of all who speak in his memory speak but one language—the language of a deeper sorrow, a far greater grief than often attends the coming of our common enemy to one of our number. The fond expressions which have been spoken to that memory so dear to us all, make clear that in all the activities of that life our brother was pre-eminently an object of affection; and I say this is a rare tribute, especially at the memorial gatherings of the Bar. Without discrimination against our profession, it is sadly true that too often these meetings are perfunctory functions, formal expressions, in honor of one with whom we have long associated and with whom we have waged our legal contests. But here the utterance is broader, deeper, more affectionate and speaks of a greater sorrow than often comes to us. We mourn one who in all the relations of life has endeared himself to all with whom he has been brought in contact.

Personally my own acquaintance with our departed brother was not so intimate before his accession to the Bench. I had known him at the bar and known him well, but brought into the closer fraternal relations which our positions brought about, I learned to know and better appreciate the qualities of mind and heart which so brilliantly characterized Judge Wanty. The lightening-like process of his mind, his acute perception, his broad

attainments and his indomitable industry, enabled him, as has been said, to be wonderfully expeditious in the discharge of his official duties.

Kindly of heart and loving, his geniality of nature endeared him to us all, brought us to know the man in the best part of his life---the very soul and heart of the man---we all speak of that and think of that, and the remembrance of it will linger in our memories. His death is such a grief as rarely comes to us. His was a life that has its lessons and its best and timeliest lesson for the younger members of the bar who have yet their paths in professional life to tread and their experience to gain. If there is anything which clearly illustrates and fitly exemplifies the power, the success, the reward of a life well lived, marked by industry, marked by purity of heart, marked by a conscientious discharge of all the duties which pertain to the relations of the citizen, the profession of the bar, the friendships of life, and in the discharge of those public duties in which he has won so much fame---it was such a life as was his. He stood without a spot upon his career that could be indicated or criticised---the man whom we mourn as one is rarely mourned. It is not often that one unites so many endearing and attractive qualities as our dead brother, and no higher tribute could be paid to him than this gathering and these heartfelt expressions which have fallen from every lip to the purity and lovable quality of his life.

Long may his memory be kept green in our midst; long may we cherish in our hearts his many excellent and loving qualities, and may he ever stand for us as an example of what can be done in our profession, oft-times maligned, rarely appreciated, but affording opportunity and always making devotion to duty the very highest quality which man possesses.

Justice Day: If there are no further remarks from members of the Bar, the Court is ready to enter upon the consideration of the entering of this memorial of record.

The Court has heard with sincere approbation the tributes of respect and affection so fittingly paid to the memory of our deceased friend and brother. The service which has been held

today is not merely that of the lip---our departed friend is mourned in the hearts of all who knew him. Taken in the prime of mature manhood, before the infirmities of age had abated his natural force, George Proctor Wanty had done his life's work well and leaves behind him a memory fragrant with good deeds and a record of duty well and faithfully done in all the relations of private and public life.

It was my privilege to first know Judge Wanty upon his accession to the Federal Bench. I think you, his professional associates, will agree with me that great as was his success as an advocate in the courts and as a counsellor in the difficult problems of modern legal practice, his special fitness was for judicial work. It was to him a labor of love. To grapple with the problems of jurisprudence and to solve them aright with no other motive in their consideration than to use the rules of law to accomplish the ends of justice, was to him a source of unending satisfaction. He had an enthusiasm for judicial work rarely possessed. No artist ever painted picture or author wrote in prose or verse with more keen delight in his labor than Judge Wanty took in the consideration of judicial questions, an occupation which to many seems dry and uninteresting, no matter how momentous or important its results may be. And he was justified in rejoicing in his work. His was a judicial mind of rare clearness and strength. He had the happy faculty of going straight to the real merits of the controversy, of weighing fairly and dispassionately the things which should determine the result, and stating with precision the conclusions at which his reasoning had arrived. Courteous to his brethren, he was ever mindful that he had once shared the struggles and anxieties of the profession from which he came. He gave to all a patient hearing and the best strength of mind and purpose to administer justice according to law. Few judges in so short a time have made so deep an impression upon the Bar and people. The records of the higher courts attest the accuracy and fairness of his judicial opinions when brought up for review. That he was spared to uphold and advance that respect and confidence of the people which is the bulwark of judicial effectiveness,

is a source of consolation to his colleagues and brethren who survive him.

Of Judge Wanty's personal side, it is difficult for those who enjoyed his friendship to speak with composure. The soul of kindly good will to his fellows, he attracted and held many friends who keenly regret that he should have fallen in "bold manhood's hardy prime." Those who enjoyed the hospitality of his home—and how many were welcome there—will never forget the cordial greeting which they received at his hearthstone. Hospitality was a pleasure to him and his. And who that saw the joy he took in the surroundings of his family and home will question that it was there that he had "garnered up his heart" and felt the keenest satisfaction of his successful life.

Judge Wanty was not merely devoted to his profession. He fulfilled the duties of citizenship at all times. He gave in full measure of time and service to church and state. His was a well rounded manhood, and his career an example to all. We sincerely mourn his loss. That we knew him and enjoyed his friendship is one of the pleasant experiences of our lives.

As we recall his genial presence, and memory brings anew the cordial warmth of his friendly greeting, the mental vision sees upon his manly brow the laurel wreath which crowns a well-spent life—emblem of the victory won.

The memorial this day presented by the Bar will be ordered to be spread upon the records of the court as a just tribute to the life and character of the deceased.

If there is nothing further before the Court, Mr. Marshal, you may adjourn this court.

**On the opening of the Supreme Court  
of Michigan at Lansing, on  
Tuesday, October 16, 1906, Mr. Roger  
W. Butterfield, of Grand Rapids,  
presented the foregoing  
memorial resolutions prepared by  
a committee of the Grand Rapids Bar,  
and moved that they be placed  
upon the records of the Court.**

**Addresses were then made as  
follows:**



## **Mr. R. W. Butterfield**

In presenting to this Court the memorial prepared by the committee upon whom that duty devolved, I am not unmindful of that large and impressive meeting in that house of mourning, the court room where Judge Wanty was accustomed to preside, nor of the part which this Court took in honoring the dead by their presence there, and by their active participation in the exercises which there took place, through one of the members of this Court who was able to speak so understandingly of Judge Wanty, because he spoke not simply as one judge of another judge, or as one lawyer of another lawyer, but because he spoke as a friend speaking of a friend. No man can expect to voice so well the general sorrow as it was voiced in the words spoken there.

And yet it has seemed to me, that in this, the highest Court of the great state of which he had become a distinguished citizen, the Court where more than anywhere else he had formed his character and won his reputation as a lawyer, it is becoming that some special consideration be given to the life and career of Judge Wanty.

I suppose the last and most decisive test of a man's character is to be found in his ideals and the methods he used for achieving them.

As a young man he took life very seriously. He had thought out clearly the things that to him seemed worthy for a man to accomplish in life, which were to be to him the best things, and he followed these best things which he had selected with a rare steadfastness to the end. His ideals were not only high, they were distinct and clean cut. The good for which he struggled was a practical good, a possible good, a good that could be accomplished. Distinctness characterized all the operations of his mind and affected his intellectual and moral attitude. I have met few men whose effectiveness was so little impaired by vagueness of conception.

But it was in the method of the pursuit of those ideals that we find what is most remarkable, it seems to me, in Judge Wanty's life. I find it difficult to put into words exactly what I mean. The best phrase to express it is one which, as ordinarily used, means something very different, and yet stripped of its theological meaning, it does contain the idea that I desire to express. I think that Judge Wanty was a man of profound faith. With a clear mind and a firm intellectual grasp, he comprehended the good which was to be accomplished. He had a heart which drew him towards that which was good, and a will which held him persistently and firmly to its accomplishment. And in his life there was the inspiration of the belief that that which was good could be accomplished, and that the accomplishment of it was the only worthy life work of a man. Convinced that the thing ought to be done, it came to him as a logical conclusion that it could be done, and the next thing with him was the doing of it. In the language of Holy Writ it seems to me it could be said of him that this, his faith, was his triumph. It influenced and guided his whole life in all its relations.

He had faith in himself. It was the farthest from vanity. It was born of the consciousness of a strength that had been tried of a sincere, honest purpose, of a consciousness of the great force, that help the man who is trying to do his duty as a man.

He had faith in his friends. He gave to them rare loyalty and generous service, and the very manner of the giving called forth rare loyalty and generous service in return. So that he was most fortunate in life in that he was not only surrounded by loyal and generous friends, but, giving the best himself, he had the happy faculty of drawing the best from those around him and lived in the atmosphere that comes from the best of human friendship.

He had faith in American citizenship, in the possibility of the accomplishment of better things in our political and municipal life. He was not one of those patriots of whom Cicero said that they are always pointing out what other people ought to do. In those contests which had for their purpose the creation of a clean

municipal life, in the preservation of law and order, he took an active part, always speaking and acting as one who believes that a better municipal life is a possibility which can be achieved.

He had faith in the administration of justice. He recognized it as one of the most important, if not the most important factor, in the maintenance and growth of a civilized community, and that only through a proper administration of justice is a high type of civilization possible. He was a lawyer, and, as such, he recognized himself as a part of that administration of justice, and to worthily participate in the administration of justice was his life work. He believed, and it was to him an inspiration, that the life of a lawyer well lived is the most magnificent offering which a man can make to his generation. He gave to it the years of strenuous, earnest, faithful work that filled his life. The years were few in number, but they were great in accomplishment. He gave to it finally that greatest gift which a man can give to the work he loves—his life.

And so it has seemed to us, who, as members of our association, were near to him in life, that his memory, the memory of a man who, as a friend, a citizen, a lawyer, and a judge, kept in his heart the inspiration of his faith and from it wrought through his life so valuable an offering to his generation, who through it developed so beautiful a character, should be preserved not for ourselves only, but for the sake of those who come after, in the places where he wrought in life, but from which he has passed forever.

We, therefore, respectfully request that the memorial presented be spread upon the records of the Court.

## **Remarks by Mr. Justice Montgomery**

Judge Wanty entered upon the practice of his profession at Grand Rapids at about the date of my own removal there from Oceana county, where I had been previously engaged in practice.

Possibly the fact that we were strangers in a strange city may have led to a closer intimacy. However this may be, our acquaintance soon ripened into a friendship which remained unbroken to the day of his death.

On another occasion I have given some expression to the sense of personal bereavement which Judge Wanty's death brought to me.

It may be fitting that I add my estimate of his character as a man and his ability as a judge to the discriminating estimate made by the committee in the memorial presented.

Judge Wanty began practice at an early age. He brought to his work a mind well stored with the elementary principles of the law but, what was of far greater value in his profession, he possessed such earnest convictions as to right and wrong, that he could be said to have had almost an instinct for justice.

In the years preceding his preparation for the bar he had had a business experience which proved to be of exceeding value to him in his practice.

He had trained himself to method in his work; when a case came to him for investigation it was given its place on his office calendar and when that day was reached, unless something most extraordinary had intervened to divert his attention, the investigation was taken up and pursued with a thoroughness such as few men give to such work.

His mind was acute and logical. He had great facility in stating a proposition, whether for the consideration of the Court or jury, so clearly and tersely, that it was sure to be understood.

From the day of his admission to the bar to the day of his all too early death, his life was a constant development and growth, until he reached such eminence as a lawyer that his ap-

pointment as a district judge was considered by his brethren the most fitting that could be made.

Had he lived to the allotted age of man he would certainly have earned, if he should not have attained, the highest judicial position in the land.

Young as he was, it can be said that no man has left a deeper impression on the life of the community in which he dwelt, or done more to elevate the ideals of the bar and bench.

### **Remarks by Mr. Justice Blair**

It was not my good fortune to be intimately acquainted with Judge Wanty, although I have known him personally and by reputation for many years. My attention was first called to him upon the occasion of his prosecuting a civil suit in the Jackson Circuit against one of the most prominent merchants of Jackson, who was defended by the foremost lawyers of Jackson County Bar. The skill with which Mr. Wanty conducted his side of the controversy and his complete triumph against what seemed considerable odds made a marked impression upon my mind, which grew more favorable with the passing years.

Judge Wanty combined with tireless industry and an enlightened understanding a lofty enthusiasm in the cause of justice, a beautiful character and equable temperament, which made him equal to all demands and specially fitted him for judicial office. His appointment to the Federal Bench was universally recognized as eminently fitting, and his discharge of the duties of his office justified the promise of his professional career.

It was my privilege to appear before Judge Wanty on the hearing of the Railroad Tax cases, involving the constitutionality of the ad valorem system of taxing railway property in Michigan. I had known him as an able lawyer; his disposition of that important litigation satisfied me that he was a great judge. The luminous opinion which he handed down speaks for itself and will continue to declare the merit of its author so long as the reports of the exalted tribunal which approved it remain. It must

have been a source of just pride to Judge Wanty to learn that he had been deemed equal to the demands of a great case by those most competent to determine. Said the Supreme Court of the United States: "In view of the exhaustive and well considered opinion of the trial judge, with the general trend of which we concur, it is unnecessary to further extend this opinion. It is sufficient to refer to that opinion for a consideration of those questions."

Judge Wanty's opinion is the most fitting monument erected by himself to his memory. Secure against the assaults of time, it will testify to remote generations the merits of a just and righteous judge.

### **Hon. Claudius B. Grant**

My brothers of the Bar:

A man's character after his death is what he makes it in his life. Neither the eulogies of friends nor the condemnations of enemies can change it. Our charitable and kindly human nature remembers and cherishes the good in our friends and forgets their errors, whether of head or heart. Fulsome eulogies will never convert a sinner into a saint and are always out of place. When one's character requires the mantle of charity to cover it, silence is best. But when one's character can truthfully be placed in the sky as a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day to guide others, especially the young, into the way of manly living and honorable success, it is due to humanity more than to him to preserve his character in the most lasting form. Then, and then only should the life and character of the lawyer and the judge be preserved in appropriate language upon the journal of this court and published in its reports.

Such were the life and character of our friend, Judge George P. Wanty. Your resolutions and the eulogies of his brethren of the Bar contain no fulsomeness nor exaggeration. They are but truthful statements of his character at the Bar, upon the Bench, in citizenship and private life. It is my great good fortune to know him personally and intimately for seventeen years. I think I can

truthfully say that I enjoyed his confidence, and was thus enabled to better know the man. The door of his beautiful home was always open to his friends, and I frequently walked in to enjoy its generous hospitality. I would not lightly encroach upon the sanctity of that home, but I may be pardoned for saying that if the same kindness, frankness, example and teaching were found in all the homes of this country, we should have much less crime, misery and unhappiness.

As a friend, a truer one was impossible.

As a citizen, no one ever had higher ideals or better measured his life by those ideals.

As a lawyer, he rose to distinction and a large clientage by his native ability, his persistent labor, and his rugged integrity. His argument was always an aid to the judges to whom it was addressed. He wanted no winning of lawsuits, based upon deception, trickery or pettifogging. These could no more mix with his nature than will oil with water. He sought to present to the court the law, governing the case in hand, that law which should govern not only that case, but all similar cases and accomplish justice between men. His was the success which every lawyer should strive to win—the only success worth winning. He was temperate in all things, unless it was in his arduous study of the law and his loyalty to his clients.

He came to his place upon the Federal Judiciary with an equipment possessed by few. His career as a Judge was unfortunately too brief, but he won the admiration of all, and his decisions will live as models of clearness and sound expositions of the law.

Perhaps I was too loving a friend and too great an admirer to detect his faults, but if he had any which we should bury with his mortal body, I never knew what they were. It is difficult for me to find language adequate to express my appreciation of the virtues and character of my deceased friend. I can truthfully say that Judge Wanty in all his relations, both public and private, lived the life of the "square deal."

Let every young lawyer follow the trail which he blazed.

## **GEORGE PROCTOR WANTY**

A cheery, hearty good-by, a tender, affectionate farewell, a cordial, whole-souled hand-clasp, a journey to distant lands for rest and quiet, recreation and study, and then---just as the refreshing cup of happiness had moistened the lips, it turns to ashes.

Surrounded by his loving family, in far away London, where life is instinct with joy and sorrow, George Proctor Wanty died. He left us only for the summer, just as the buds and blossoms gladdened every eye. And, alas, ere the frost had dimmed the luster of spring—so unexpected—this impressive personality entered the open portals of eternity.

No more loveable, kindlier man has gone from among us. Pure in mind, gentle as a child, modest in his habits, unassuming in his tastes, this brilliant lawyer, upright judge and honored citizen could not well be spared. At the very prime of his vigorous manhood, his life full of good nature; honored by everyone who knew him and dearly loved by many, the ocean cable shocked this community when from its fathomless depths it told of Judge Wanty's death. Just at mid-day, when all nature seemed so beautiful and inspiring, when life was so sweet and nature so joyous, we are saddened and stunned in the presence of this sorrow.

Judge Wanty's professional career is an inspiration to every struggling young lawyer. He took up the arduous labors of the law with a light heart and a heroic resolve, and in a royal battle for supremacy won its highest laurels. His commission as district judge was given him by President McKinley as a reward of merit richly deserved. His judicial career has been as brilliant as his work at the bar. The vigor and thoroughness of his decisions gave him high rank among the jurists of the land. He was frequently drafted for extraordinary service in other states.

But why multiply honors. George Wanty could not be circumscribed by station; he cannot be measured by ordinary standards. He was every inch a man. Men confided in him, women looked up to him, children loved him. His heart beat

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